

Kernels rally for 4th straight win

Written by Morgan Hawk
Saturday, 12 April 2014 19:01 -



LANSING, Mich. - The Cedar Rapids Kernels won their fourth straight game Saturday afternoon with a 5-3 comeback victory against the Lansing Lugnuts before 3,693 fans in a Midwest League game at Cooley Law School Stadium.

Tanner Vavra collected three RBIs and drove in two runs with a single to tie the game in the eighth inning.

The Kernels' offense was quiet through the first five innings, having recorded only a double by Joel Licon to lead off the third inning. Trailing 3-0, Engelb Vielma and Jeremias Pineda started the sixth inning with consecutive hits to put runners on the corners. With one out, Vavra plated Vielma with an RBI groundout to make the score 3-1.

The Kernels went ahead 4-3 in the eighth inning by scoring three runs. Logan Wade singled to start the inning and spark the rally.

Pineda hit a bouncer off Lansing pitcher Griffin Murphy that deflected to second baseman Jason Leblebajian. Wade, who was running to second base, avoided the tag from Leblebajian. Pineda was safe at first on the play and Leblebajian's throw to first was off-target, which allowed Wade to reach third. Pineda stole second base to put two men in scoring position.

With two outs, Vavra capped a good at-bat by driving in Wade and Pineda with a single into right-center field. That tied the game, 3-3.

On the next pitch, Zack Larson roped an RBI double into the left-field corner. Vavra wheeled around the bases to score the go-ahead run, putting the Kernels up 4-3.

The visitors added an insurance run in the ninth inning, making the score 5-3. Bryan Haar

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crushed a ball off the top of the wall in deep left. He sped toward third base for a triple and was able to score when shortstop Dewan Lugo's relay went astray.

Kohl Stewart started for the Kernels and pitched four innings. He allowed three runs on four hits with one walk and two strikeouts. The runs, hits and walk all came in the third inning. Three of the four hits were knocked down by Kernels infielders. Other than the third inning, Stewart did not allow a base runner.

The Kernels' bullpen pitched five scoreless innings. Josue Montanez went two innings, striking out three. Brandon Bixler (1-0) picked up the win after adding one scoreless inning with two strikeouts. Brandon Peterson was credited with the save after going the final two innings while striking out three Lugnuts.

The Kernels (6-3) are scheduled to conclude their series and road trip at Lansing Sunday at 1:05 p.m. Felix Jorge (0-1, 9.00) is slated to pitch for Cedar Rapids.

The Kernels return home Monday night at 6:35, opening up a six-game homestand against South Bend and West Michigan.

KERNELS (5): Kanzler, cf, 4 0 0 0, Vavra, 2b, 4 1 1 3, Larson, rf, 4 0 1 1, Garver, dh, 4 0 0 0, Haar, 1b, 4 1 1 0, Quesada, c, 4 0 0 0, Licon, 3b, 4 0 2 0, Vielma, ss, 2 1 1 0, Wade, ss, 2 1 1 0, Pineda, lf, 4 1 1 0. Totals 36 5 8 4.

LANSING (3): Parmley, cf, 5 1 0 0, Leblebajian, 2b, 2 1 0 0, Dean, 1b, 4 0 2 2, Nay, 3b, 4 0 1 1, Lugo, ss, 4 0 0 0, Atkinson, dh, 4 0 0 0, Ramirez, rf, 4 0 1 0, Nussy, c, 4 1 1 0, Loveless, lf, 3 0 1 0. Totals 34 3 6 3.

Kernels 000 001 031 - 5 8 0
Lansing 003 000 000 - 3 6 2

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Stewart, Montanez (5), Bixler (7), Peterson (8) and Quesada. Graverman, Murphy (8) and Nussy. W - Bixler (1-0). L - Murphy (1-1). S - Peterson (1). 2B - Licon (2), Larson (5), Nay (4), Ramirez (2). 3B - Haar (1). SB- Pineda 2 (3). E - Leblebician (1), Lugo (1). A - 3,693.